

The background of the cover is a stylized, hand-drawn map of the Mediterranean region, showing the outlines of continents and islands. The map is rendered in a light blue color on the left side and a darker blue on the right side, creating a two-tone effect. The lines are simple and sketchy, giving it a hand-drawn, artistic feel.

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MAIMONIDES'S FIRST RECEPTION IN LATIN PHILOSOPHY*

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Abstract

The *Sententia cum questionibus in libros De anima I-II Aristotelis* (c. 1240) by Petrus Hispanus provides the first quotations of the *Guide for the Perplexed* by Maimonides in a Latin commentary to the *De anima*. This paper aims to show the textual context of these references and to provide some remarks on the role they play in the theory of the intellect in this commentary.

Key Words

Prophecy, Intellect, *Guide for the Perplexed*, Petrus Hispanus, Medieval Epistemology.



*There are as many different opinions concerning Prophecy
as concerning the Eternity or Non-Eternity of the Universe.*

MAIMONIDES, *Guide*, II.32¹

At least two Latin medieval translations of the *Guide for the Perplexed* (*More Nebujim* in Hebrew) already existed in the thirteenth century, corresponding to translations by Shmuel ibn Tibbon and Yehudah al-Harizi, respectively.² According to Herbert Davidson and Görge Hasselhoff, the translation from al-Harizi was the most-used and was probably disseminated from the Parisian *milieu*

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¹ MAIMONIDES, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, II.32, trans. MORIZ FRIEDLÄNDER, Dutton and Company, New York 1936, p. 219.

² There seems to exist at least one other Latin translation, which was used for the work *De erroribus philosophorum* by Giles of Rome, cf. GÖRGE K. HASSELHOFF, « Die Schriften von Moses Maimonides », *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale*, 46 (2004), p. 48–52.

around the year 1240, but, according to Wolfgang Kluxen, al-Harizi's text was translated to Latin earlier, between the years 1230 and 1235.³ In any case, this translation was the one used by some important theologians or masters related to the University of Paris. Indeed, Maimonides made valuable contributions to the Latin philosophical tradition, mainly related to the problem of creation, proofs of the existence of God or the interpretation of the law. Nevertheless, not all of his views were always well understood or correctly appropriated. For this reason, Kluxen prefers to use the expression 'Maimonides's image' because his texts were not always well known in this first Latin reception, and quite frequently, the allusion to his explanations reflects only some *opiniones communes*.⁴

Indeed, many important figures related to the Parisian *milieu* seemed to have contact with Maimonides's doctrines. Moneta of Cremona, according to Kluxen, was the first to introduce Maimonides by name in his *Summa* (1232–1234).⁵ Other authors quoting Maimonides were William of Auxerre, William of Auvergne, Philip the Chancellor, Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Siger of Bravant, Albert the Great, and Thomas Aquinas. For the history of Maimonides's Latin reception, nonetheless, it is also important to include Petrus Hispanus, who is the author of the only known commentary on Aristotle's *De anima* where the *Guide* is used as a source.

I. *The Theory of Prophetic Knowledge in the 'Guide' and Its First Latin Reception*

Maimonides wrote on prophecy in several works, as seen in his *Commentary on the Mishnah*, the *Mishneh Torah*, and his *Epistle to the Jews of Yemen*.⁶ His theory of

³ Cf. WOLFGANG KLUXEN, « Literargeschichtliches zum lateinischen Moses Maimonides », *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 21 (1954), p. 23–50, here p. 34–41; HERBERT A. DAVIDSON, *Moses Maimonides: The Man and His Works*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2005, p. 427; GÖRGE K. HASSELHOFF, « Las traducciones latinas medievales de la obra maimonidiana », in CARLOS DEL VALLE RODRÍGUEZ, SANTIAGO GARCÍA-JALÓN DE LA LAMA, JUAN PEDRO MONFERRER SALA (eds.), *Maimónides y su época*, Sociedad Estatal de Commemoraciones Culturales, Madrid 2007, p. 487. As DAVIDSON points out, the one by al-Harizi was not the most reliable translation: « Not only is it a translation of a translation, and not only does it derive from the less reliable of the two medieval Hebrew translations; it is incomplete » (*Moses Maimonides*, p. 427).

⁴ WOLFGANG KLUXEN, « Maimonides and Latin Scholasticism », in SHLOMO PINES, YIRMIYAHU YOVEL (eds.), *Maimonides and Philosophy*, Martinus Nijhoff, Dordrecht–Boston–Lancaster 1986 (*Archives internationales d'histoire des idées*, 114), p. 224. Cf. DAVIDSON, *Moses Maimonides*, p. 404: « Quite apart from the out-and-out eclectics, a long line of authors managed to construe the *Guide* as saying something different from what, at least on the surface, the words do say.»

⁵ Cremoneta attributed to Maimonides a book *contra antiquitatem mundi*, cf. KLUXEN, « Maimonides and Latin Scholasticism », p. 225.

⁶ Cf. HOWARD KREISEL, *Prophecy. The History of an Idea in Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, Kluwer, Dordrecht–Boston–London 2001 (*Amsterdam Studies in Jewish Thought*, 8), p. 156–209.

prophecy in the *Guide for the Perplexed* is explicitly developed in the second part, from chapter 21 to chapter 48. Like some other important doctrines in that book, his view shows an assimilation of Aristotelianism – an assimilation also seen in the doctrines of some other Arabic authors, such as al-Farabi or al-Kindi before him.

According to Maimonides's account in book II, chapter 32, there are three main opinions on what a prophecy is: one is the opinion of ignorant people who believe that God provides the gift of prophecy to human beings without considering intellectual dispositions and only considering moral characteristics. A second position, which, according to Maimonides, is closer to the truth, is that of the philosophers, who define prophecy as a state of perfection of a man who, with the help of a good imagination and the perfection of intellectual and moral capacities, has a natural capacity to prophesy. The third and final opinion is the position on prophecy sustained by Jewish Law, which is, to Maimonides, the most correct:

1. Among those who believe in prophecy, and even among our coreligionists, there are some ignorant people who think as follows: God selects any person He pleases, inspires him with the spirit of prophecy, and entrusts him with a mission. It makes no difference whether that person be wise or stupid, old or young [...].
2. The philosophers hold that prophecy is a certain faculty of man in a state of perfection, which can only be obtained by study. [...] for prophecy is a natural faculty of man. It is impossible that a man who has the capacity for prophecy should prepare himself for it without attaining it [...].
3. The third view is that which is taught in Scripture, and which forms one of the principles of our religion. It coincides with the opinion of the philosophers in all points except one. For we believe that, even if one has the capacity for prophecy, and has duly prepared himself, it may yet happen that he does not actually prophesy. It is in that case the will of God [that withholds from him the use of the faculty]. According to my opinion, this fact is as exceptional as any other miracle, and acts in the same way. For the laws of Nature demand that every one should be a prophet, who has a proper physical constitution, and has been duly prepared as regards education and training.⁷

To Maimonides, prophecy is defined by Jewish Law in almost the same way as it is defined by the philosophers, in the sense that it is received only by men who attain the highest intellectual level; nonetheless, it differs in one central point because its actuality depends on the divine will. Maimonides states that prophecy is only produced with the 'permission' of the divine will.

⁷ MAIMONIDES, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, II.32, p. 219–220.

The most synthetic description of prophecy is given in *Guide* II, chapter 36. There, besides the exposition of the different grades of prophecy, the Jew states:

Prophecy is, in truth and reality, an emanation sent forth by the Divine Being through the medium of the Active Intellect, in the first instance to man's rational faculty, and then to his imaginative faculty; it is the highest degree and greatest perfection man can attain.⁸

This one, which involves intellect and imagination, is conceived as the highest manifestation of prophecy, and it consists of emanated knowledge provided by God via the agent intellect (« Active Intellect »), a transcendent and incorporeal being that spreads this emanation to the human intellect and imagination. As Maimonides continues to explain in chapter 45, the prophecy is the transmission of some divine message that comes in the form of some kind of spiritual 'vision' inspired by God through the action of this separated intelligence.⁹ Maimonides, in this account, leaves out the extraordinary and unique case of Moses, whose prophecy came directly from God without mediation.¹⁰

Despite its frequent explanations of prophecy, the *Guide* introduces some difficulty to the understanding of this phenomenon and its real nature. The controversy and the discrepancy among interpretations has its basis in the text itself, which can be read at different levels in relation to the divine or natural causality of the phenomenon.¹¹ Indeed, Maimonides stands up for divine causality, but he explicitly establishes speculative training and good ethical practice as a previous condition. Consequently, ethics and the study of metaphysics are presented as conditions *sine quibus non* of prophecy.¹²

⁸ Ibid., II.36, p. 225.

⁹ As DAVIDSON points out, « The last rung in the hierarchy of transcendent incorporeal beings consisting in pure thought and subordinate to God in Maimonides' picture of the universe is an incorporeal being known as the active intellect. Maimonides further understood – and here he was following the Arabic philosopher Avicenna in particular – that the active intellect continually and invariably emanates the entire range of abstract human thoughts. Human beings tap into the transmission of the active intellect to the extent that their intellects are attuned for doing so. Although the active intellect is the immediate source, the emanation may be said to come from God » (*Moses Maimonides*, p. 371).

¹⁰ MAIMONIDES, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, II.35, p. 224–225: « Your mind must comprehend the distinction of the prophecy and the wonders of Moses, and understand that his greatness in prophetic perception was the same as his power of producing miracles. If you further assume that we are unable fully to comprehend the nature of this greatness, you will understand that when I speak, in the chapters which follow this, on prophecy and the different classes of prophets, I only refer to the prophets which have not attained the high degree that Moses attained. »

¹¹ Cf. KREISEL, *Prophecy*, p. 148–315.

¹² MAIMONIDES, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, II.32, p. 220: « As for the principle which I laid down, that preparation and perfection of moral and rational faculties are the *sine qua non*, our Sages say

Maimonides seems to establish a continuity between this specific type of revelation and natural intellectual knowledge. This aspect will be controversial in both the Jewish and Latin medieval *milieux*, with Maimonides being frequently accused of rationalizing the faith.¹³

It is well known that Albert the Great was one of the first Latin thinkers to be strongly influenced by the explanations of prophecy in the *Guide*.¹⁴ Albert quoted Maimonides many times¹⁵ but specifically addressed prophecy in two of his works, namely the *Questio de propheta* (c. 1245) and the commentary on *De somno et vigilia* III (c. 1254).¹⁶ Nonetheless, only in the latter is found a real presence of the *Guide*, explicitly or implicitly, pointing to the fact that Albert did not yet have interest in or access to the *Guide* when he wrote the former text.¹⁷

exactly the same: 'The spirit of prophecy only rests upon persons who are wise, strong, and rich.' We have explained these words in our Commentary on the Mishnah, and in our large work ». Cf. also MAIMONIDES, *Epistle to Yemen*, trans. ABRAHAM HALKIN, discus. DAVID HARTMAN, The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia 2009, p. 124: « Transcendent wisdom is a sine qua non for inspiration. It is an article of our faith that the gift of prophecy is vouchsafed only to the wise, the strong, and the rich. Strong is defined as the ability to control one's passions. Rich signifies wealthy in knowledge ».

¹³ Cf. DAVIDSON, *Moses Maimonides*, p. 411: « The *Guide* was nevertheless criticized for specific perceived errors. [...] The common denominator was unhappiness with Maimonides' rationalizing of the Jewish religion ». Nonetheless, Giles of Rome, in the *Errores philosophorum*, only accuses Maimonides of defending the sufficiency of man of receiving the gift of prophecy in the *Dux perplexorum* (called there *De expositione legis*): « Vltorius errauit circa prophetiam, credens hominem se posse sufficienter disponere ad gratiam prophetiae, et quod Deus non elegit in prophetando quemcumque hominem singularem, sed illum qui se adaptat ad talia. Vnde uisus est uelle diuinam gratiam dependere ex operibus nostris. Haec autem patent II° libro De expositione Legis, cap. XXXII° » (AEGIDIUS ROMANUS. *Errores philosophorum*, XII Maimonides, error 7, ed. JOSEF KOCH, transl. JOHN O. RIEDL, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee 1944, p. 62).

¹⁴ According to JAMES A. WEISHEIPL, Albert the Great was in Paris between 1243 and 1248 (« Life and Works of St Albert the Great », in Id. [ed.], *Albertus Magnus and the Sciences: Commemorative Essays 1980*, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto 1980 [Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies. Studies and Texts, 49], p. 21–28). HASSELHOFF even considers Albert the Great as the first Latin author to quote the *Guide*, a bit later than 1245 (« Las traducciones latinas medievales de la obra maimonidiana », p. 487). Actually, 'rabi Moyses' is also named in the *Summa* by Alexander of Hales, but since the chronology of the composition of this work is insufficiently known, it is not possible to say that Alexander of Hales was the first, cf. CHRISTOPHER M. CULLEN, « Alexander of Hales », in GORGE J. E. GRACIA, TIMOTHY B. NOONE (eds.), *Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Blackwell, Malden 2002, p. 105.

¹⁵ Cf. MANUEL JOËL, *Verhältnis Albert des Großen zu Maimonides*, Groß, Breslau 1863, p. 14–21.

¹⁶ On Albert the Great's chronology, see WEISHEIPL, « Life and Works of St Albert the Great », p. 13–51.

¹⁷ Cf. JEAN-PIERRE TORRELL, *Recherches sur la Théorie de la Prophétie au Moyen Âge. XIIe-XIVe siècles. Études et Textes*, Éditions universitaires, Fribourg 1992 (Dokimion, 13), p. 173. ANNA RODOLFI includes more works in what she names the « corpus propheticum » of Albert the Great, cf. EAD., « Sogno e profezia in Alberto Magno », in STEFANO PERFETTI (ed.), *Scientia, Fides, Theologia. Studi di filosofia medievale in onore di Gianfranco Fioravanti*, Edizioni ETS, Pisa 2011, p. 193–215.

Indeed Albert in the commentary adopted some of Maimonides's explanations, such as the distinction among vision, prophecy and dream, or his account of the different common opinions on prophecy.¹⁸ But since Albert considered Maimonides's theory of prophecy too much naturalistic, he situated it in the context of the *prophetia naturalis* or prophecy according to the philosophers. Thus, the Dominican is categorical in distinguishing his own vision of prophecy from that of Maimonides.

In his vision, prophecy is not only because of divine causality but also has divine nature:

Taliter igitur et talis uocatur uisio in prophetia: prophetia enim proprie uocatur quando homo per raptum intellectus sui illustratur de scientia futurorum uel aliorum occultorum ad quae deueniri non potest per inquisitionem et rationem.¹⁹

To Albert, prophecy is a revealed knowledge of future events; it occurs by grace and it supposes a break with the natural realm, as described in the Scriptures and also defended by the theologians.²⁰ Albert thus denies that prophecy can belong to the *lumen naturale* or have real continuity with speculation and the rational exercise. Prophecy is, according to the Dominican, a supernatural cognitive dimension.²¹

His most brilliant disciple, Thomas Aquinas, quoted the *Guide* many times, as he was strongly influenced by Maimonides's explanations of the demonstrations

¹⁸ Cf. KLUXEN, « Maimonides and Latin Scholasticism », p. 225.

¹⁹ ALBERTUS MAGNUS. *De somno et vigilia*, III.3, in *B. Alberti Magni ... Opera omnia*, ed. AUGUSTE BORGNET, vol. IX, Vivès, Paris 1890, p. 181.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 193: « Omnibus his quae dicta sunt habitis, non est difficile scire quid sit prophetia apud philosophos [...]. Est autem et aliud genus uisionis et prophetiae secundum altissimos theologos qui de diuinis loquuntur inspirationibus, de quibus ad praesens nihil dicimus omnino. [...] si quid enim forte propriae opinionis haberemus, in theologicis magis quam in physicis, Deo uolente, a nobis proferetur ». Cf. KLUXEN, « Maimonides and Latin Scholasticism », p. 225.

²¹ AS JACOB GUTTMANN states: « Albertus' attitude toward Maimonides' doctrine of prophecy was peculiar; he could scarcely avoid being powerfully influenced by Maimonides' ingenious exposition of this problem. Albertus' explanations concerning the difference between divination in the dream and vision, as well as his explanations of the fundamental diversities in the natural dispositions of men, by which also the varying capacity of different people for knowing the future and hidden things is accounted for (*De somno et vigilia*, III, 'De Diuinatione', chap. iii. et seq.), are undoubtedly taken from the Moreh Nebukim. But since, according to his distinction between natural and supernatural knowledge, prophecy proper can not belong to the *lumen naturale*, he adopts the view of Maimonides for the explanation of natural prophecy only, as it occurred also in the pagan world » (« Albertus Magnus », in *The Jewish Encyclopedia. A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, vol. I, Funk and Wagnalls, New York 1901, p. 323–324, now online at <<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/1082-albertus-magnus>> (accessed 20 November 2017).

of the existence of God, creation, the divine attributes and prophecy. According to Ruedi Imbach, in addition to the eighty-two explicit citations of Maimonides in Aquinas's *Summa*, there are many other implicit references.²² The treatise on prophecy, in the *Secunda Secundae*, contains some of them, but this fact does not imply that Thomas agrees with all of Maimonides's opinions; indeed, Aquinas does criticize the author of the *Guide* with regard to the role of natural causation in producing prophecy. As Aquinas argues, in agreement with Albert, prophecy can happen without any preparation or human disposition because it is produced just *ex inspiratione diuina*.²³ In sum, this revelation (because prophecy is a kind of revelation) is a form of superior knowledge that comes from God *per gratiam*.²⁴

II. Rabi Moyses in Petrus Hispanus's 'Sententia cum questionibus'

The *Sententia cum questionibus in libros De anima I-II Aristotelis* is a Latin commentary from the thirteenth century (c. 1240).²⁵ It is considered to possibly be among the first commentaries on the *De anima* in the Latin tradition.²⁶ The

²² RUEDI IMBACH, « Alcune precisazioni sulla presenza di Maimonide in Tommaso d'Aquino », in DIETRICH LORENZ, STEFANO SERAFINI (eds.), *Instituto San Tommaso. Studi*, (Studia Pontificiae universitatis a S. Thoma Aquinate in Urbe, n.s., 2), Pontificia Università S. Tommaso D'Aquino, Roma 1995, p. 48–64.

²³ THOMAS DE AQUINO. *Summa theologiae*, II^a–II^{ae}, q. 172, a. 3, co., in *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis ... Opera omnia ... Leonis XIII. P. M. edita*, vol. X, Polyglotta, Roma 1899, p. 380: « Respondeo dicendum quod, sicut dictum est, prophetia uere et simpliciter dicta est ex inspiratione diuina, quae autem est ex causa naturali, non dicitur prophetia nisi secundum quid. Est autem considerandum quod, sicut Deus, quia est causa uniuersalis in agendo, non praeexigit materiam, nec aliquam materiae dispositionem ».

²⁴ Cf. MERCEDES RUBIO, *Aquinas and Maimonides on the Possibility of the Knowledge of God. An Examination of the 'Quaestio de attributis'*, Springer, Dordrecht 2006 (Amsterdam studies in Jewish Thought, 11), p. 200: « The answers to the arguments contribute to explain the contemplation of the prophets and other individuals who experienced a very high kind of knowledge in this life. According to Aquinas, what the prophets saw were forms or images that led them to a certain apprehension of the knowledge of God ». Cf. ANNA RODOLFI, 'Cognitio obumbrata'. *Lo statuto epistemologico della profezia nel secolo XIII*, SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, Firenze 2016 (Micrologus Library, 74), p. 135.

²⁵ There is an old edition in PEDRO HISPANO, *Obras Filosóficas II. Comentario al 'De anima' de Aristóteles*, ed. MANUEL ALONSO ALONSO, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid 1944 (henceforth, PETRUS HISPANUS. *De anima*). The texts here are from our new edition in progress.

²⁶ Cf. BERNARDO CARLOS BAZÁN, « 13th Century Commentaries on *De anima*: From Peter of Spain to Thomas Aquinas », in GIANFRANCO FIORAVANTI, CLAUDIO LEONARDI, STEFANO PERFETTI (eds.), *Il commento filosofico nell'occidente latino (secoli XIII–XV): Actes du colloque international de Florence–Pise, Octobre 2000*, Brepols, Turnhout 2002 (Rencontres de philosophie médiévale, 10), p. 126; JOSÉ MEIRINHOS, *Metafísica do homem. Conhecimento e vontade nas obras de psicologia atribuídas a Pedro Hispano (século XIII)*, Afrontamento, Porto 2011 (Biblioteca de Filosofia, 29), p. 27 and 36. In particular, see the latter for the psychological doctrines of this work and for a more dedicated study of the work attributed to Petrus Hispanus entitled *Scientia libri de anima* (edited in PEDRO HISPANO, *Obras*

author, Petrus Hispanus, has been traditionally identified with Pope John XXI, an identification that has not been sufficiently documented.²⁷

The commentary itself only addresses the *De anima* book I from chapters 1 to 3 and book II from chapters 1 to 4. The translation used by Petrus Hispanus should have been the *Vetus*, from the Greek, by James of Venice, which was the most used by the Latin commentators. The context is clearly the Faculty of Arts, where the treatise by Aristotle was read and taught, and the text is quite possibly the *reportatio* of an oral course divided into *lectiones*.²⁸ This commentary manifests some doctrinal syncretism, which is characteristic of the commentaries produced around 1240. Thus, whereas the principal source was the Aristotelian book, the discussion on this book was enriched by the previous Latin tradition and by the Arabic texts, which had been recently translated into Latin.²⁹ Authors such as Avicenna and Averroes were very influential on the reception of Aristotle's text and its theory of knowledge. In this particular respect, the commentary is interrupted long before it begins to address the most inspiring parts of the *De anima*, namely those on intellect and intellectual knowledge. Nonetheless, it is possible to reconstruct part of Petrus Hispanus's epistemology from the extant text.³⁰

The references to the *Guide for the Perplexed* are provided in relation to this specific subject, the intellect, in two different parts of the commentary. The importance of the existence of these quotations to Maimonides has not been underlined by the bibliography,³¹ despite being one of the first Latin texts quoting the *Guide* and the only commentary based on the translation *Vetus* of the *De anima* to make use of Maimonides's theory of prophecy.

Filosóficas I. De anima, ed. MANUEL ALONSO ALONSO, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid 1941, repr. Juan Flors, Barcelona 1961²).

²⁷ See this issue in JOSÉ MEIRINHOS, « Petrus Hispanus Portugalensis? Elementos para uma diferenciação de autores », *Revista Española de Filosofía Medieval*, 3 (1996), p. 51–76; ANGEL D'ORS, « Petrus Hispanus, O.P., Auctor Summularum (I) », *Vivarium*, 35 (1997), p. 21–71; ID., « Petrus Hispanus O.P., Auctor Summularum (II). Nuevos documentos y problemas », *Vivarium*, 39 (2001), p. 209–254.

²⁸ Cf. JOSÉ MEIRINHOS, « Comentar Aristóteles na primeira metade do século XIII. A *Sententia cum questionibus in De anima* atribuída a Pedro Hispano », *Revista da Faculdade de Letras-Série de Filosofia*, 23 (2005), p. 127–160.

²⁹ Cf. MEIRINHOS, *Metafísica do homem*, p. 28–33.

³⁰ CELIA LÓPEZ ALCALDE, « Self-knowledge in Petrus Hispanus' Commentary on the *De anima* », *Vivarium* (forthcoming).

³¹ In this respect, GÖRGE HASSELHOFF, in his study of the first Latin reception of Maimonides, refers to Petrus Hispanus as identified with Pope John XXI, for whom was prepared a manuscript of the work, now in Todi (*Dicit Rabbi Moyses. Studien zum Bild von Moses Maimonides im lateinischen Westen vom 13. bis zum 15. Jahrhundert*, Königshausen und Neumann, Würzburg 2004, p. 126). Nonetheless, as we have said, the identification of the Pope and the author of the *corpus petrunicum* – which includes the commentary – is quite problematic, despite still being assumed by many scholars, cf. fn. 27.

II.1. *First quotations (Book I, lect. 6)*

Three of the five quotations of Maimonides are inserted in the second question of Book I, lect. 6, in the commentary on Aristotle's *De anima* I, 403a, in the part where Aristotle asks if there is any proper and separable action of the soul.³²

Following the scholastic method of arguments *pro* and *contra*, the authority of Maimonides – explicitly called Rabi/Raby Moysi (or just Moyses) – is invoked in the two arguments in favor of the existence of a proper action of the soul.

In the first one, Maimonides together with al-Ghazali are quoted to speak about the operation of the intellect. Both thinkers appear to be adequate authorities to show that the more intellect is separated from the body, the more it can develop its own action, i.e. *intelligere*. However, understanding is not the only thing that happens in this situation, as a contemplative state can also be attained from this process of separation or *exitus*:

Omnis substantia que quanto corpori magis est permixta tanto magis sua potentia et sua operatio debilitatur, et fit obscurior et quanto magis a corpore distat, tanto magis sua potentia confortatur et uiget et illuminatur, et sua operatio habet propriam operationem que siquidem cessante aspectu ad corpus et cessante operatione corporali in ipsa exercetur. Set anima intellectiua est huiusmodi, ergo habet operationem propriam. Hec autem non est nisi intelligere, ergo intelligere est propria operatio anime intellectiue. Maior patet, quia *quando sopitur in operatione per applicationem ad corpus et illuminatur per separationem habet operationem sine corpore, et hoc est quod dicit Moyses. Et quando anima maxime separatur a corpore tanto magis operatur et uiget eius operatio, et hoc patet de illis quibus apparent uisiones. Hoc enim est per distantiam anime a corpore, et similiter apparent uisiones. Tunc enim et quasi exit ipsa anima corpus et distat a corpore, et inspectio eius non figuratur corpori, et dicit Algazel super hoc: apparent ei uisiones in sompno per inspectionem in libris seruatis, qui dicuntur intelligentie.*³³

Indeed, the fifth treatise of *Physics* in al-Ghazali's *Maqāsid al-falāsifa* deals with the actions of the active intellect, a reality that impresses and influences the soul. These actions enable types of existence from abstract concepts to visions and prophecies.³⁴

³² ARISTOTELES. *De anima*, I, 403a: « Si quidem igitur est aliquid anime operum aut passionum propria, continget utique ipsam separari. Si uero nulla est propria ipsius, non erit separabilis, sed sicut recto in quantum est rectum multa accidunt, ut tangere aeneam speram secundum punctum, non tamen tanget hoc separatum rectum. Inseparabile enim est, siquidem semper cum corpore quodam est ».

³³ PETRUS HISPANUS. *De anima*, I, lect. 6, q. 1, *prima ratio* (in the edition by ALONSO, p. 292). Italics are mine (*passim*).

³⁴ AL-GHAZALI. *Metaphysics*, ed. JOSEPH THOMAS MUCKLE, St. Michael's College, Toronto 1933, p. 183–197. Cf. ANTHONY H. MINNEMA, *The Latin Readers of Algazel, 1150–1600*, Ph.D. Diss., University of Tennessee 2013, p. 201: « The fifth treatise of the *Physica* focuses on the last intelligence or

The next reference to Maimonides is provided in the second *ratio*, which departs from the Neoplatonic double *status* of the soul, a view that influenced both the Latin and Arabic traditions.³⁵ Petrus Hispanus assumes that view referring to the *Liber de causis* (proposition VII) and the double mode of the soul:

Sicut habetur in libro *De causis*, omnis substantia spiritualis habet duplicem modum: operationem unam per quam respicit primam causam que est supra tanquam creata ab ea et aliam per quam respicit illud quod est sub se tanquam illud cuius est causa et quod regit. Set anima intellectiua est huiusmodi, ergo habet aliquam operationem propriam. Hec autem maxime inter omnes intelligere est, ergo intelligere est propria operatio anime. Maior patet, quia scripta est. Minor patet quia operatio per quam ordinatur anima ad creatorem inspiciendo ipsum tanquam suam causam non est ammixta corpori. Operatio autem per quam regit corpus est ammixta corpori, ergo anima intellectiua habet operationem propriam, que est intelligere suam causam. Et quod hec operatio non sit ammixta corpori patet per Dionysium dicentem: intelligentia cum respicit primam lucem que illuminat omnem lucem uiuentem uel uenientem in hunc mundum clarescit, cum autem diuertitur ab ea tunc obscuratur et deprauatur intellectus eius. Et similiter anima intellectiua quanto magis respicit suum creatorem tanto magis clarescit; quanto uero ab eo magis diuertitur, tanto magis obscuratur [...].³⁶

Here, the double mode of the soul means that the soul has a double orientation by nature: indeed, the soul deals with the body and corporeal realities in order to understand and manage them. Nonetheless, the soul is also oriented to its spiritual creator. Thus, in the first case, the soul acts through the body, but when the intellective soul, separated from sensible conditions, looks at the superior realm, at the first light, the soul itself appears as a pure spiritual being.³⁷

Agent Intellect, which is responsible for the workings of the sublunary world and the human souls that inhabit it. Algazel further divided this treatise into ten chapters, each of which treats a quality that 'flows' from the Agent Intellect or that the Agent Intellect 'imprints' on souls. The ten qualities include the power to comprehend abstract concepts, rather than rely on the senses, as well as the ability to see visions, predict the future, perform miracles, and prophesy. »

³⁵ Cf. JEAN ROHMER, « Sur la doctrine franciscaine des deux faces de l'âme », *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 2 (1927), p. 73–77; JOÃO FERREIRA, « A doutrina das duas faces da alma, em Pedro Hispano », *Cultura*, 14 (2002), p. 219–231. Here, Ferreira speaks about this double face of the soul in Petrus Hispanus's work. Ferreira gives a synthetic explanation, considering the two works to be written by only one author and making some mistakes in some of the references, mixing and confusing the texts.

³⁶ PETRUS HISPANUS. *De anima*, I, lect. 6, q. 1, *secunda ratio* (in the edition by ALONSO, p. 292–293).

³⁷ On the double aspect of the soul, see also in the commentary: « Set tamen distinguendum est quod anima duplicem habet cognitionem: unam quam habet a suo creatore a quo exit, et hanc habet naturaliter, et hec est cognitio summi boni et sui ipsius. Hec enim cognitio insita est ei naturaliter et potencia ad hoc, et hec est ei innata. Est autem alia cognitio anime quam habet mundanorum, quam per fantasmata acquirit, et hec est ei acquisita et non innata, et de hac loquuntur omnes philosophi qui dicunt quod cognitio animae est acquisita; de prima autem non

In this state, looking at the *prima lux*, light is spread over the agent intellect and subsequently reaches possible intellect and, finally, sensibility. The description of this phenomenon is provided in the following lines, with a clear – but inexact – quotation of the description of prophecy provided by Maimonides:

Et hoc est quod dicit rabi Moysi: *quando anima separatur a conditionibus ita quod non intendit eis, tunc respicit lucem primam et irradiatur illa lux primo supra intellectum agentem, et deinde supra possibilem. Et tunc supra uirtutes sensibiles irradiatur ita quod homo uidet secreta, et in hoc est recte dicens.*³⁸

These reasons in favor of the existence of a proper action of the soul seem to be assumed in the *solutio*, where Petrus Hispanus explains the two kinds of knowledge that the human intellect is able to have. The manoeuvre used by Petrus Hispanus to integrate this Neoplatonic aspect of the double reality of the soul into the Aristotelian framework provided by the *De anima* consists of conceiving this duality in terms of Aristotle's bipartition of agent and possible intellect. Accordingly, the agent intellect is responsible for the knowledge of superior (spiritual) things, whereas the possible intellect permits the knowledge of corporeal reality and its domination by the soul:

Dicendum est ad hoc quod anima intellectiua habet duplicem aspectum: unum, scilicet ad creatorem a quo exit in esse quem cognoscit, quoniam illius est causa. Iterum habet aspectum ad substantias superiores sibi similes separatas a materia et ad corpus quod dirigit et ad ea que ad corpus ordinantur que sub ipsa sunt. Et secundum duplicem aspectum duplicem habet potentiam: unam per quam comparatur ad superiora et per quam nata est separari et que est lumen ipsius anime illuminata, et hec potentia est intellectus agens, et hec est ei propria. In hac enim non indiget corpore uno modo. Alia autem potentia eius est intellectus possibilis per quam cognoscit corpus et ista inferiora et regit corpus.³⁹

For our purpose, however, the most relevant fragment comes immediately next, when Petrus refers specifically to the knowledge of the superior realm, identified

est uerum. Anima enim illuminata est a primo et data est ei uirtus a principio ut cognoscat se ipsam et diuinum bonum, et de hac cognitione uerum est quod est ei innata » (Ibid., I, lect. 1, q. 2, p. 66, repeated at p. 166–167). In his view of the soul's double face, Petrus Hispanus is not following Avicenna's double face as postulated in his highly influential *Liber de anima*, which, in contrast, gathers the two intellectual spheres in man, namely, the speculative and the practical intellects. In Petrus Hispanus's account, this knowledge, in which both the possible and agent intellect are involved, is closely related to the data from the senses, cf. MEIRINHOS, *Metafísica do homem*, p. 98, fn. 162.

³⁸ PETRUS HISPANUS. *De anima*, I, lect. 6, q. 1, *secunda ratio* (in the edition by ALONSO, p. 293).

³⁹ Ibid., *solutio* (in the edition by ALONSO, p. 294–295).

with God. There is given the last reference to Maimonides related to the prophetic phenomenon, as described in the *Guide*:

Et quia anima intellectiua ordinatur in cognitionem creatoris duplici modo disponitur ad ipsum: uno modo per inmediate[m], sicut patet in anima que cognoscit primum non est per ista inferiora, set per distantiam a corpore cognoscit ipsum et dicitur quasi separata. Vnde non figitur eius cognitio corpori set cognoscit ipsum per aspectum ad ipsum et hec est *quoniam separatur a conditionibus materialibus ita quod eis non intendit et tunc respicit primam lucem, sicut dicit rabi Moysi. Et irradiatur illa lux supra animam et ipsam illuminat et similiter sensus, ita quod eis ostendit secreta.* Alio modo disponitur ad primum secundum quod cognoscit ipsum per posteriora sicut per effectus suos et operationes et sic cognoscitur per organa et oritur illa cognitio ab intellectu potenciali. Sicut autem iste status est duplex, ita duplex est operatio anime ipsius: una communis et alia propria, et una appellatur intellectus agens, alia uero intellectus possibilis. Set potentia suprema, que est intellectus agens, dirigit inferiorem, que est intellectus possibilis excitando ipsam et illuminando et ducendo ipsam ad effectum et ad actum cognitionis [...].⁴⁰

Indeed, this and former references are based on the description seen above of prophecy, given by Maimonides's *Guide for Perplexed* II, chapter 37 in the Latin text:

Scito quod ueritas prophetiae et substantia sua est largitas a creatore effusa mediante intelligentia agente super potentiam anime rationalis primo demum super imaginatiuam uirtutem et ille est finis gradus hominis et finis perfectionis quae inueniri potest in eius specie et hoc est finis perfectionis uirtutis imaginatiuae.⁴¹

The quotation is apparently quite literal but in fact there is a significant modification. The agent intellect, in the *Sententia*, is far from being an entity that is exterior to and separated from the human soul irradiating knowledge to the human soul, as it is the *intelligentia* in the *Guide*.⁴² Petrus Hispanus adapts Maimonides's account of this superior knowledge into the framework of his own interpretation of the double aspect of the soul.⁴³ According to Petrus, this double aspect means that, on the one hand, both intellects, agent and possible, are responsible for the production of knowledge as described by Aristotle in the *De*

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ *Rabi Mossei Aegyptij Dux Seu director dubita[n]tium aut perplexorum in Treis Libros Diuisus* (henceforth, MAIMONIDES. *Dux seu director*), II.39, ed. AGOSTINO GIUSTINIANI, ab Jadoco Badio Acensio, Paris 1520, fol. 63b.

⁴² Cf. Ibid., fol. 65: « Et oportet quod illud sit in uirtute rationali: quia ueritas istius intelligentie agentis est super ipsam et extrahit eam ad actum ».

⁴³ Cf. MEIRINHOS, *Metafísica do homem*, p. 99.

anima. However, whereas both in combination, and in combination with the body, are responsible for speculative knowledge when operating together and looking at the physical world, only the agent intellect, which is proper to the human soul, can, by means of the first light, see (*vivet*) the Creator and the creature's secrets in a non-speculative knowledge. This indicates that Petrus Hispanus conceives of Maimonides's prophetic knowledge not specifically as *scientia futurorum* but as *cognitio secretorum*, related to the creation and Creator.⁴⁴ The illumination will include the sensibility, as Maimonides and other thinkers stated in dealing with prophecy. This knowledge is a transcendent knowledge that comes not via species but via divine illumination.

From the comparison of texts, it is obvious that Petrus Hispanus assumes Maimonides's view of prophecy but with some substantial and not hazardous modifications. The agent intellect is to the Latin master also the principal actor of this superior knowledge, but there is a dramatic difference in the fact that this agent intellect is inside the human soul, which is *lumen*, and is illuminated by nature directly by God. This illumination, which occurs in a pure way in the agent intellect when separated from the sensual realities, is actualized by God showing the secrets of the divinity itself. At this point, there is no impediment to this contemplative state, which seems to be less oriented to the vision of future things and more to the divine reality, eternal.

Thus, what Maimonides considered a 'prophetic phenomenon' is in Petrus Hispanus's view integrated among the potentialities of human knowledge, possible due to a natural disposition or potentiality of the agent intellect, proper to all human beings. The factuality of this knowledge, which would always be active if human intellect did not have an existence united to the body, is instantaneous when the intellect is separated from its material conditions. Having achieved this state, the agent intellect and the whole soul are irradiated by the first light or God directly, with no mediation at all. In the context of Aristotle's psychology, we can see, thus, the background of Augustine's doctrine of divine illumination.

Therefore, the inclusion of Maimonides's description of prophecy, as it is provided, assumes a significant role in the theory of knowledge of Petrus Hispanus in the *Sententia cum questionibus*; namely as one kind of potential knowledge that the human soul is able to have. The fact that the author of the *Sententia* refers in this context to Maimonides and not to other authorities in a commentary of the *De anima* makes sense despite its eccentricity, since the *Guide*

⁴⁴ In the Latin tradition the prophecy has this double aspect introduced by Gregory the Great, according to RODOLFI, *Cognitio obumbrata*, p. 16: « Gregorio introduce una variante e precisa che oggetto dell'annuncio profetico insieme al futuro (*futura*) è anche la spiegazione dei misteri, cioè di quelle realtà nascoste (*occulta*) cui si accenna nella Scrittura, realtà che possono perciò riguardare anche il presente e il passato ».

is not a philosophical book in essence but rather an exegesis of Scriptures with many philosophical approaches.⁴⁵ This transcendent approach, via Maimonides, to Aristotelian psychology fits well with Petrus Hispanus's own view of the soul, who, like Albert the Great, seems to perceive Maimonides as a peripatetic thinker.

This is the reason why Maimonides is quoted in this context and not Avicenna, who would be a more expected authority, since Avicenna himself exposes its own view on prophecy in his *Liber de anima* V.6. Thus, this text would have been the most natural and expected source in our Commentary because of its inclusion of superior knowledge in the soul:

Possibile est ergo ut homo in seipso habeat ingenium et ex ratione sua, sine doctrina, faciat syllogismum [...] Possibile est ergo ut alicuius hominis anima eo quod est clara et cohaerens principiis intellectibilibus, ita sit inspirata ut accendatur ingenio ad recipiendum omnes quaestiones ab intelligentia agente, aut subito, aut paene subito, firmiter impressas, non probabiliter, sed cum ordine qui comprehendit medios terminos (probata quae sciuntur ex suis causis non sunt intelligibilia). Et hic est unus modus prophetiae qui omnibus uirtutibus prophetiae altior est. Vnde congrue uocatur uirtus sancta, quia est altior gradus inter omnes uirtutes humanas.⁴⁶

Nonetheless, Avicenna's general theory of knowledge, with its exterior agent intellect, which emanates the intelligibles over the human intellect,⁴⁷ was well known by the Latin authors and also rejected by many of them, including Petrus.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Cf. DAVIDSON, *Moses Maimonides*, p. 350–351.

⁴⁶ AVICENNA, *Liber de anima*, V.6, ed. SIMONE VAN RIET, vol. II, Peeters–Brill, Louvain–Leiden 1972, p. 152–153. Cf. GÉRARD VERBEKE, « Introduction » to AVICENNA, *De anima*, vol. II, p. 66*: « Il est d'ailleurs à remarquer que, d'après Avicenne, l'intellect humain peut recevoir les intelligibles par l'intermédiaire des sensibles; mais il peut les recevoir aussi directement sans cet intermédiaire: dans ce dernier cas, l'Intellect agent intervient de façon immédiate pour informer l'intellect humain et lui communiquer les intelligibles Avicenne admet d'ailleurs que l'information venant de l'intellect agent peut se faire aussi par l'intermédiaire des âmes des corps célestes (celles-ci émanent, comme on le sait, des Intelligences pour autant qu'elles ont le regard fixé sur la perfection qui les précède immédiatement). Si l'information se fait par les âmes des corps célestes, elle a comme sujet récepteur la faculté imaginative, ce qui n'est donc pas le privilège que des prophètes ». Avicenna also addresses prophecy in *Metaphysics*, X.1.

⁴⁷ Cf. VERBEKE, « Introduction », p. 66*: « Les intelligibles ne proviennent donc pas des données sensibles; ce n'est pas en se basant sur les données de l'expérience que l'intellect humain parviendra par lui-même à élaborer l'intelligible ».

⁴⁸ Nonetheless, see DAG NIKOLAUS HASSE on the reception of Avicenna's theory of the active intellect on the one hand, and the real position or intention of Avicenna on the other: « How then did Avicenna come to be identified with the doctrine of the separate active intellect? Avicenna himself, who explores so many questions of the Peripatetic tradition in detail, does not discuss or even raise the question of whether the active intellect is separate. It was not a specific topic for him, but rather a Peripatetic commonplace. Thus, we have the strange situation that

This 'externalism' in Avicenna's epistemology also shapes Avicenna's view of prophecy provided in his *Liber de anima*, and, consequently, did not seem to fit well with Petrus Hispanus's general description of the human soul and knowledge.

II.2. Second Quotations (Book I, lect. 10)

Next quotations have the particularity that they are not provided in the edition of Alonso because they appear only in the manuscript of Venice (fol. 68va–b and 70vb, respectively), which has been only partially edited.⁴⁹ They belong to Book I, lect. 10.

The first one appears in the discussion on the intellect as the motor of the world. Maimonides is referenced in the third argument in favor, in the discussion on the intellect as the first motor, in q. 1:

*Tertia ratio talis: sicut dicit raby Moysi recte in hoc dicens: solus intellectus et agentis per cognitionem est proprium quod, cum mouet, unus et idem immobilis perseuerans et inuariabilis, sit principium multarum operationum. Sed motor uniuersalis est motor a quo mediante ipso inuariabili et uno multa fluxerunt, ergo est solum agens per intellectum et uoluntatem, quia causa que producit in esse conseruat eas et per ipsam mouetur res et uniuersaliter uiuunt, ergo a tali solo mouere per intellectum exierint a tali solo mouetur, ergo omnis res mouetur per intellectum et intellectum mouet omnia.*⁵⁰

The argument claims that the intellect is the universal mover, which, despite being invariable and immobile, is the cause of all the dynamic reality. This supreme intellect, the cause of all movement, is firstly postulated in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* XII, chapters 7 and 9. To Petrus Hispanus, this intellect is God itself, from which all was created through His divine will.

Avicenna is often quoted as stating the proposition 'intellectum agentem esse separatum', which does not appear in his translated works. An important factor is Avicenna's analogy of the sun (Aristotle had compared the activating intellect to light). It not only served as a link to Augustine's comparison of God with the sun, it also implied Avicenna's conviction of the separateness of the active intellect. This is obvious for instance from the early testimony (1225) of Anonymous (Gauthier), *De anima et de potentiis eius*: 'In this Avicenna erred, because he made the active intellect, i.e. the intelligence or angel, separate from the soul, just as the sun is separate from sight' » (*Avicenna's 'De anima' in the Latin West. The Formation of a Peripatetic Philosophy of the Soul 1160–1300*, The Warburg Institute–Nino Aragno, London–Turin 2000, p. 222–223).

⁴⁹ Cf. JOSÉ MARIA DA CRUZ PONTES, « Un nouveau manuscrit des *Questiones libri de anima* de Petrus Hispanus Portugalensis », *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale*, 43 (1976), p. 167–201. The edition by Alonso is based only on the manuscript in Krakow (Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, 726).

⁵⁰ Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. Z 253 (1826), fol. 68vb.

The next and last reference to the *Guide* is given in the same *lectio*, in q. 5, « circa quintam sic proceditur et queritur utrum intellectus primus qui est motor uniuersalis sit forma uel natura ». Here the answer is negative: in summary, the first intellect is not the formal cause of the world or nature, since God should be considered an agent essentially different from its action. Only by means of His generous will is God the cause of all created beings:

Vnde agens in illa multiplicat dona, scilicet dator et non suam substantiam, et causa huius est multiplicatio per extrinseca quam facit. Principium ergo hoc tertio modo multiplicauit creaturas et non primo nec secundo modo sed tertio modo, scilicet largitudo, sicut dator multiplicat dona sua, scilicet largitudo sua. Vnde dicit Raby Moysis bene dicens in hoc quod creature exeunt a creatore non sicut radius a lumine uel sole nec sicut filius a patre, sed sicut donum a datore et a largietate.⁵¹

To Petrus Hispanus, the first intellect cannot be understood as form or nature because there is a large gap between God, as the creator of everything, and creation. The negation here, thus, has to do with considering the cause (i.e. God's essence) as the formal cause and deducing, by means of His effects (the creation), the essence of God.

Indeed, Maimonides addressed the topic of God as the first intellect or intellect in act in part I of his *Guide*. He states that divine wisdom and will are the same in essence, an identification that makes it possible to consider God's will as the real cause of creation of the world.⁵²

This second context is thus related to the other big topic in the reception of Maimonides's *Guide*, the defense of creation in time, which is not defended by Aristotle since the Greek philosopher conceived the world as eternal, the same as the first motor. Disagreeing with this interpretation on Aristotle, Maimonides says that in fact the Greek is not defending the eternity in an explicit way but only providing plausible arguments.⁵³

Thus, according to Maimonides, the right doctrine is the one that defends creation of the world in time. This creation is produced by the act of the divine will of the supreme intellect as appears in the *Guide for Perplexed* I, chapter 52 in the Latin text:

⁵¹ Ibid., fol. 70rb.

⁵² MAIMONIDES, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, p. 104: « According to either opinion, the series of the successive purposes terminates, as has been shown, in God's will or wisdom, which, in our opinion, are identical with His essence, and are not any thing separate from Himself or different from His essence ».

⁵³ Cf. DAVIDSON, *Moses Maimonides*, p. 369. Indeed, the eternity of the world would make the assumption of this precise point of Aristotle's metaphysics and cosmology very problematic.

Cum ergo fuerit intentio nostra in dicendo ipsum sapientem esse, quia est apprehensio suae substantiae, erit uita ipsius et sapientia res una. Ipsi uero non intendunt huic rationi, sed attendunt apprehensionem ipsius erga eius creatura. Similiter etiam sine dubio nec potentia nec uoluntas inuenitur in creatore ad substantiam ipsius: quia non est potens super substantiam suam, nec uolens ad eandem substantiam suam [...]. Dispositiones autem et nominationes cogitauerunt in probationem diuersarum operationum inter creatorem et sua causata, quoniam Creator creare quod creat et uult facere creatura esse secundum quod fecit ipsa esse et scit ea quae fecit esse, sic ergo probatur tibi quod istae dispositiones non conueniunt ei cum intendimus in substantiam eius, sed cum intendimus in creatura ipsius. [...] sic non dicemus quod in eo est res addita, per quam est res uolens et res secunda per quam est potens et res tertia alia, per quam scit creatura sua, sed substantia eius est una, simplex, super quam non est res aliqua addita ullo modo. Et ipsa substantia creauit quicquid creatum est, et scit id quod sicut, non per aliquam additam ullo modo.⁵⁴

To Maimonides, God produced the world by the act of his divine will and not by means of emanation or by participation of his essence. This explains the fact that God cannot be known through the knowledge of the creature but only by negation.⁵⁵ The text by Maimonides probably referenced here is the *Guide for the Perplexed* I, chapter 57 in the Latin text:

Et dicimus quod Creator est antiquus: hoc est quod non habuit causam quae dederit ei esse. Post hoc apprehendimus quod huius entis essentia non est eiusmodi: ut sibi soli sufficiat ut sit sic: sed emanauerunt ab eo entia multa, nec illa emanatio est sicut calor ab igne proueniens: neque sicut lux a sole: sed est splendor largitans, iuuans ea.⁵⁶

Maimonides's explanations on Aristotle's position partly allow for a good point of departure to Petrus Hispanus's considerations on God as the first intellect. Even

⁵⁴ MAIMONIDES. *Dux seu director*, I.52, fol. 20.

⁵⁵ At this respect, see KENNETH SEESKIN, *Maimonides on the Origin of the World*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2005, p. 189: « By looking at the world as the object of God's will, Maimonides gains several advantages. First, he can invoke the idea that the will does not have to bring about a given effect right away but can will what it wants when it wants. Even though God is eternal, it does not follow that the world or its material component is eternal as well. Second, he can avoid the 'one cause, one effect' principle and point out, as he does at GP 2.22, that a single act of will can accomplish many different things. It is true that God's will can be viewed as a cause to the degree that it has the power to realize anything that is logically possible. We saw, however, that it is not the sort of cause that forces us to posit a resemblance between it and its effect. Unlike a natural cause, the will does not pass something of itself to the object willed: its imply desires that the object come to be ». Cf. EDWARD C. HALPER, « Maimonides on the Scope of Divine and Human Self-Knowledge », *Quaestio*, 15 (2015), p. 299–308.

⁵⁶ MAIMONIDES. *Dux seu director*, I.57, fol. 22.

though Petrus Hispanus does not discuss this subject in the commentary, as it is not pertinent to the general topic addressed, he uses it to show the relation between the human and the divine intellect, which manifests, as all things, the distance between God and the creature.

Concluding remarks

The *Sententia cum questionibus* is, as far as we know, the only Latin commentary from the middle of the thirteenth century (including Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas's texts) that adjusts Maimonides's description of prophetic knowledge into a theory of human knowledge in commenting on the *De anima*, a book of natural philosophy. In the *De anima*, book of natural philosophy, human knowledge is grounded in the process of abstraction, departing from the senses. In contrast, the 'prophetic' knowledge assumed by Petrus Hispanus is beyond natural knowledge and is caused directly by the generosity of God, the same as the creation and the movement of the world. As Kreisel notes, to Maimonides, both prophetic knowledge and creation refer to the divine will,⁵⁷ and this link is probably not against Petrus Hispanus's own convictions.

The advantage that Maimonides's view provides to our author has to do with the perception of Maimonides as a peripatetic thinker, who supplied some undeniable authority to Petrus Hispanus's aim of integrating some kind of non-abstractive knowledge.⁵⁸ Real knowledge of God can come via the light of the human agent intellect, in parallel to the knowledge that can be from God's effects, namely from the knowledge of the creature. Thus, there is the possibility

⁵⁷ KREISEL, *Prophecy*, p. 223: « The third opinion, identified by Maimonides as the opinion of the Law, stakes a course between these two approaches. Maimonides stresses his agreement with the opinion of the philosophers, with one crucial proviso. One who possesses all the requisite preparations for prophecy may still fail to become a prophet due to an act of divine will. This is similar to the occurrence of any miracle in his view. He continues his discussion by adducing examples of God withholding prophecy. The rest of the chapter is devoted to a vigorous defence of the principle that only the perfect can become prophets. The naturalism of the philosophers' approach to prophecy is upheld in this opinion, while the necessity characterizing their approach is negated. God acts primarily through the order of nature but can also perform wilful acts independent of the order. The similarity between Maimonides' approach to divine governance and his approach to prophecy is striking. He indicates his agreement with Aristotle's approach to divine governance on all issues except for the question of creation (Guide 2.6). At stake in this issue, according to Maimonides, is the notion of divine will ».

⁵⁸ Cf. THIERRY ALCOLOUMBRE, « Vers la prophétie », in Id., *Maimonide et le problème de la personne*, Vrin, Paris 1999, p. 141: « La doctrine du prophétisme permet à Maimonide d'articuler le fondement historique de la tradition avec les acquis de la 'science' aristotélicienne. A l'instar de la Providence, intégrée à l'ordre de la nature physique, la Révélation est intégrée dans la structure du psychisme humain ».

of another *cognitio* far from the senses, with another source and mode, inside the human soul, that comes when the soul does not attend to the corporeal reality.⁵⁹

The adoption of this partially modified lecture on Maimonides's view of prophecy, therefore, does not reveal any criticism of Maimonides's possible rationalism or naturalism; quite the opposite, since Petrus Hispanus integrates it as a natural disposition of human intellect provided by God in the very moment of its creation. Thus, Maimonides is an authority carefully selected by Petrus Hispanus in this context, as could be appreciated by the expressions (*bene dicens*, *recte dicens*, etc.) that accompany the quotations.⁶⁰

In any case, this 'adapted' integration of some aspects of Maimonides's view of the intellect, which, in this case, does not assume the action of agent intelligences upon the human intellect, fits very well in Petrus Hispanus's Neoplatonic and Christian epistemological framework, which admits the existence of a further contemplative state with divine revelation is provided but does not assume the reception of universal knowledge from a superior entity, as Avicenna conceives it. In this regard, Petrus Hispanus seems to see Avicenna's theory far from both Aristotle and his own view on the soul and knowledge. At this point, the authority of Maimonides, who combined peripatetic philosophy and Scriptural exegesis in his *Guide*, seems to be the most adequate one to support Petrus Hispanus's syncretic conception of knowledge.

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⁵⁹ On the relations among and the *sapientia*, which includes this superior knowledge, *scientia*, and *philosophia*, cf. GIULIO D'ONOFRIO, *Vera philosophia*, Città Nuova, Roma 2013.

⁶⁰ Neither Averroes nor Avicenna nor other authors frequently quoted in the *Sententia* receive so much approbation by means of these or other similar words.

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